

REMARKS

Claims 1-3, 5 and 14 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1-3, 5 and 14 are amended; and claims 4, 6-13 and 15-25 are canceled without prejudice to, or disclaimer of, the subject matter recited therein. Support for the amendment to claims 1-3, 5 and 14 can be found in the specification, for example, at paragraphs [0337] - [0378] of U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2004/0098320. No new matter is added. Reconsideration and prompt allowance of the application are respectfully requested.

The Office Action rejects claims 1-5 and 14 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Applicants amend claims 1-3, 5 and 14 responsive to the rejection, and cancel claim 4. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

The Office Action rejects claims 1-5 and 14 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Kikugawa (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2007/0050459) in view of Benson (U.S. Patent No. 6,301,660). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

The above-applied references do not teach, and would not have rendered obvious, in combination, every claim feature of independent claim 1. For example, the above-applied references do not teach or suggest "a step of judging, by the system, whether or not the image displayed by using the electric album service is permitted to be browsed by a third party when the image has been demanded to be carried in the bulletin board with the message by the user, the image having been set in advance by the user to be permitted or not to be permitted to be browsed by the third party," as recited in independent claim 1.

The Office Action acknowledges that Kikugawa does not disclose protecting contents provided by a user by providing access to the contents to authorized users (Office Action, page 4). The Office Action asserts that col. 7, lines 11-23 of Benson discloses the above feature (Office Action, page 4). However, Benson merely discloses a response means having

a means for proving that it has access to a private keying material by interacting with a challenge means using an asymmetric cryptographic scheme (see col. 7, lines 11-23 of Benson). Benson does not disclose a step of judging, by the system, whether or not the image displayed by using the electric album system is permitted to be browsed by a third party when the image has been demanded to be carried in the bulletin board with the message by the user, the image having been set in advance by the user to be permitted or not to be permitted to be browsed by the third party. Therefore, Kikugawa and Benson do not teach, and would not have rendered obvious, the combination of all of the claim features of independent claim 1.

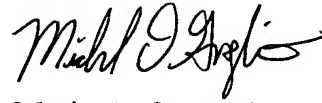
Therefore, for at least these reasons, independent claim 1 is patentable over the applied references. Claims 2, 3, 5 and 14 depend from independent claim 1, thus claims 2, 3, 5 and 14 are also patentable over the applied references for at least their dependency on claim 1, as well as for the additional features they recite.

Thus, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejections.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of the claims are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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Attachment:
Request for Continued Examination

Date: January 11, 2010

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